

WHISTON
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report

BY

THOMAS U. MERCER, M.B., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health for the Whiston

Rural District,

FOR THE YEAR 1909.

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Annual Report for the Year 1909.

The year 1909 has produced a record in the number of notifications of infectious diseases received. The total amounts to 208, as compared with an average for the last ten years of 107. The largest number, as usual, have been Scarlet Fever cases, of which I have received 170 notifications, against an average for the last ten years of 60, every township having furnished its quota, with the exception of Speke. The largest number, viz., 43, have been returned from Whiston, chiefly during the last half of the year. In this township, a large number of children attend schools outside the district, principally in Prescott, where the disease has been very prevalent, and these are the children who have been mostly attacked. The second largest number, 32, were from Eccleston, the majority occurring during the first quarter of the year. From this township, also, many children attend schools outside the district. In Bold and Ditton, too, the disease has been prevalent, and over 20 cases have been notified from each of these townships. Although we have had such a large number of cases of Scarlet Fever, there has been no special epidemic, and I have not found it necessary to advise the closing of any schools for this disease. In four instances I have found children going about in an infectious state, three of them attending school, but the school was closed immediately afterwards for the ordinary vacation.

In order to prevent the spread of infection, I had six schools disinfected during the summer holidays, and another one at Christmas. I think it advisable that every school should be thoroughly cleaned down during every vacation, and disinfected as well, if there has been any disease among the scholars.

There have been fewer cases of Diphtheria than usual, viz., 13, as against 29 last year, and an average of 22 for the last 10 years. None of the cases reported during the year proved fatal, a fact, I think, partly due to our keeping a supply of antitoxin, and allowing practitioners to have it free of charge for use in the district, so that it may be employed at the beginning of the illness, when its curative effect is most marked. Medical men in the neighbourhood have made more use of this supply than in former years.

The Enteric Fever cases numbered 10. Of these seven occurred in Whiston, five being inmates of the Workhouse, and one an attendant there. At the time of this outbreak the drains in the Workhouse grounds were being re-laid, and many of the old ones were exposed, and found to be foul and defective. Some of the old W.C.'s also were in a bad state. After the new drains were put in, and the connections made to the new main sewer, there were no further cases.

The case of Puerperal Fever occurred in the practice of a midwife residing outside the district. She was suspended from her occupation for several weeks.

Besides the notifiable diseases, there have been a large number of cases of other forms of infectious disease, particularly Measles and Mumps, and I found it necessary to close four schools during the year owing to the prevalence of these diseases amongst the scholars.

I find that it is still a common practice for school teachers to send children out from school to enquire the cause of absence of other children. This should on no account be allowed, as it is one of the means by which disease is spread. In a case recently, where there were several children in the house suffering from Mumps, three separate messengers were sent from the school on different days.

The staff at the Sanatorium have been kept exceptionally busy during the whole year, as, besides our own cases, we have had 38 patients, including one with Small-pox, from outside districts, making a total number of cases treated at the Hospital of

183. For the first time we have had to refuse admission to several cases, both of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria, as the Hospital was already overfilled.

A great improvement has been made at the Sanatorium by the substitution of W.C.'s for the old pail closets; and the additional W.C. near the bathrooms has proved a great convenience. Something must be done before next winter for the better heating of the wards. Many patients have complained of the cold, and there have been a large number of cases of enlarged glands, some of which may have been caused through the coldness of the wards.

In one or two instances during the year complaints have been made on account of keeping patients in Hospital longer than usual, but the period of infectivity of Scarlet Fever is by no means definite, and as long as there are certain symptoms present, especially discharges from the ears and nostrils, it is not wise to allow these cases to mix with other children, as these discharges are undoubtedly infectious.

The Death Rate for 1909 is slightly below that of last year, and is less than the average for the last 10 years. As compared with the general death rate of England and Wales, and the death rates of other districts similar to our own, our death rate is very low, which is very satisfactory, but I think that it might still be reduced. As will be seen from Table IV., the principal causes of death are chest and heart diseases. The chest diseases include 21 deaths from Phthisis. This is the largest number returned for any year for which I have records. I think the mortality from this cause might be reduced if there were some means of isolating those who are infected, or even of getting the addresses of those suffering from the disease, as great ignorance prevails as to its infectious character, and a general impression seems to exist amongst the poor that anyone suffering from Phthisis must be boxed up like a greenhouse plant, and not allowed any fresh air for fear of catching cold, whereas the chief means of prevention and cure are abundance of fresh air. I understand that the Guardians are considering some plan for the special treatment of the poor suffering from this disease, but I certainly think that it should be put on the list of notifiable diseases; it is a much more serious complaint than Erysipelas, which is notifiable. Thirty

deaths were recorded as being due to Pneumonia and Pleurisy. It is probable that some of these were Phthisis cases also, as an attack of either Pleurisy or Pneumonia is often the first indication that a patient is suffering from Consumption.

The deaths of infants under one year of age amounted to 46, which is about the average, and gives an infantile death rate of 91.6 per 1,000 births. This again, is less than the general rate, but might still be reduced, if it were not for the ignorance prevailing as to the feeding and care of infants.

The Birth rate is less than that of last year, and also less than the average for the last 10 years, but is still fairly satisfactory.

With regard to some of the things reported on previous occasions, there have been several improvements of late. The greater part of Bold has been supplied with water from the Widnes mains, and nearly all the houses on the line of route have had connections put in. There are still some smaller areas in which water is urgently required, in one of which, the neighbourhood of Fox's Bank, I understand, a considerable number of houses are shortly to be built. I hope that when this building takes place, water will be brought to the district.

I have not had as many complaints with regard to scavenging as in former years, but there is still room for improvement in this matter. Wherever it is possible the old-fashioned privies should be done away with, and W.C.'s and dry ashpits substituted. The presence of a foul privy near a dwelling is always a menace to the health of the inhabitants, as not only is the atmosphere, and in many instances the soil also, about the dwelling polluted, but these places afford convenient breeding places and habitation for flies, which in their turn contaminate food, and especially milk food.

I am pleased to state that considerable improvement has taken place in the condition of the Cowsheds during the year. Several have been rebuilt, and, as a rule, they are kept cleaner than formerly, and the lime-washing and cleansing are done more regularly since the adoption of the Dairies', Cowsheds', and Milkshops' Orders, and the distribution of copies of the regulations.

Only two Slaughterhouses are now in regular use in the district. These are quite satisfactory. The Bakehouses, too, are kept in good condition. The Toolshops and Laundries show an improvement in the way of cleanliness. One of the commonest faults to be found in Wash-houses is the unevenness of the floors, with the result that water lies about in pools, and soaks through into the ground beneath.

Better sanitary accommodation is still required at some of the public elementary schools in the district. This matter is at present receiving the attention of the Council.

The Sanitary Inspector has been kept busy during the whole year. He has handed me a report of the various sanitary improvements made in the different townships, of which I append a summary.

THOMAS U. MERCER, M.B., D.P.H.

February, 1910.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

The following is a description of the Nuisances dealt with—

Foul Privies	41
Foul Ashpits	45
Defective Drains	8
Choked Drains	32
Foul Ditches	2
Defective Water Closets	6
Choked Water Closets	6
Pigs kept so as to be a nuisance	2
Fowls kept so as to be a nuisance	4
Foul Cesspool	1
Night Soil deposited so as to be a nuisance ...	1
Manure deposited so as to be a nuisance	1
Choked Intercepting Traps	7
—	
Total	156

Number of Notices served to abate nuisances in the district during the year 1909—total 76.

Number of Letters written calling attention to Nuisances and other sanitary work required to be done for the year ending 1909—total 225.

Number of houses disinfected in the district after infectious diseases for the year ending 1909 :—

1	Ditton	25
2	Eccleston	25
3	Cronton	1
4	Bold	17
5	Halewood	10
6	Knowsley	1
7	Rainhill	21
8	Whiston	43
9	Windle	1
10	Tarbock	8
11	Hale	1
		—
	Total	153

Schools :—

Bold	1
Ditton	2
Eccleston	2
Rainhill	2
	—
Total	7

Number of Privies converted into Water Closets :— ,

Eccleston	8
Rainhill	3
Whiston	3
	—
Total	14

THE SANATORIUM.

A considerable amount of my time was taken up making a survey of all the grounds and buildings, shewing position of existing drains, closets, &c., and preparing sections of new drains. Six pail closets have been converted into water closets, and two have been fixed in the bathrooms attached to the wards. A new main drain has been constructed, and all the branch drains connected into it.

The whole of the drainage now goes direct into the new main sewer in Delph Lane. The whole of the above work was carried out under my direct supervision.

GEO. S. FRASER,

Sanitary Inspector.



TABLE I.

WHISTON RURAL DISTRICT.

Vital Statistics of whole District during 1909 and previous years.

YEAR.	Population estimated to Middle of each year.	BIRTHS.		DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.		DEATHS AT ALL AGES. TOTAL.		Total DEATHS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE DISTRICT.	Deaths of Non-residents registered in Public Institutions in District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond District.	DEATHS AT ALL AGES. NETT.	
		Number.	Rate*	Number.	Rate per 1000 Births registered.	Number.	Rate*				Number.	Rate*
I	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1899.	19090	460	23·7	56	121·7	503	26·3	279	277	-	226	11·8
1900.	19100	488	25·5	38	77·8	544	28·4	328	302	-	242	12·6
1901.	18959	507	26·7	68	134·1	568	29·9	336	320	-	248	13·0
1902.	19460	521	26·7	66	126·6	561	28·8	339	318	-	243	12·4
1903.	19860	507	25·5	44	86·7	551	27·7	341	317	-	237	11·9
1904.	19820	519	26·2	63	121·6	535	26·9	308	295	3	243	12·2
1905.	20071	485	24·1	46	94·8	543	27·0	330	310	1	234	11·6
1906.	20319	509	25·0	55	108·0	569	28·0	350	323	2	248	12·2
1907.	20484	447	21·8	45	100·7	489	23·9	297	275	3	217	10·6
1908.	20730	519	25·0	51	98·3	530	25·6	331	308	6	228	11·0
Averages for years 1899-1908.	19789	496	25·0	53	107·0	539	27·3	324	305	1·5	237	11·9
1909.	21060	502	23·8	51	101·6	556	26·4	350	331	2	227	10·8

* Rates in columns 4, 8, and 13 calculated per 1,000 of estimated population. Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 31,139. Total population at all ages, 18,959 (Census, 1901).

Number of inhabited houses, 3247. Average number of persons per house 5·8. Institutions within the District receiving Sick and Infirm persons from outside the District—Union Workhouse, Whiston, 227 deaths; Asylum Annexe, Rainhill, 100 deaths; Sanatorium, Whiston, 4 deaths.

Institutions outside the District receiving Sick and Infirm persons from the District—Royal Infirmary, Liverpool, 1 death; Children's Infirmary, Liverpool, 1 death.



TABLE II.

WHISTON RURAL DISTRICT—VITAL STATISTICS OF SEPARATE LOCALITIES IN 1909 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

NAMES OF LOCALITIES.		1 BOLD.			2 CRONTON.			3 DITTON.			4 ECCLESTON.			5 HALE.			6 HALEWOOD.			7 KNOWSLEY			8 RAINHILL.			9 SPEKE.			10 TARBOCK.			11 WHISTON.			12 WINDLE.													
YEAR.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.																
1899	1020	27	17	3	565	15	4	1	2563	76	31	14	3113	44	33	6	518	15	12	2	2390	54	36	11	1200	19	14	2	2335	66	28	6	496	10	3	1	630	10	5	2	3326	69	35	7	934	28	6	1
1900	1020	21	16	3	565	21	9	0	2563	75	33	7	3123	50	32	4	518	10	17	2	2390	71	18	11	1200	20	15	2	2335	67	35	5	496	6	10	0	630	15	9	3	3326	85	36	9	934	24	11	3
1901	950	29	18	3	583	22	14	4	2605	79	40	10	3429	61	30	11	522	12	3	0	2095	53	37	11	1325	22	12	1	2208	52	28	8	381	10	6	1	590	21	14	6	3430	77	36	8	841	27	10	5
1902	950	25	19	4	583	16	2	0	2646	66	31	8	3429	51	36	12	522	13	4	0	2095	67	24	7	1325	25	11	2	2368	77	38	10	381	11	4	1	590	16	14	5	3730	100	50	15	841	9	10	2
1903	1015	25	11	3	588	13	2	0	2701	95	29	8	3444	66	31	7	522	6	5	0	2115	50	36	4	1325	22	16	0	2398	67	37	6	381	11	1	0	600	8	9	4	3930	91	48	11	841	23	12	1
1904	1015	26	13	3	588	13	4	2	2701	78	51	18	3444	49	20	2	522	13	7	1	2115	60	44	9	1325	18	16	4	2518	67	38	7	381	12	2	1	600	10	4	1	3770	101	37	13	841	19	7	2
1905	1027	32	20	3	592	13	9	1	2764	87	34	10	3466	45	23	3	527	9	4	0	2140	54	30	6	1335	16	16	3	2560	71	31	2	384	10	7	2	601	4	4	2	3830	94	40	11	845	19	16	3
1906	1046	34	15	6	595	9	10	0	2825	82	41	10	3489	40	17	4	535	16	8	2	2160	52	33	9	1365	31	15	1	2580	64	24	3	387	10	7	0	601	10	10	1	3841	100	59	18	895	19	9	1
1907	1062	25	9	0	598	16	10	0	2865	74	30	5	3512	32	27	2	545	18	4	0	2191	66	25	9	1365	14	17	3	2591	59	23	6	393	7	1	1	610	13	4	0	3852	77	55	10	900	17	12	3
1908	1075	24	20	3	603	14	9	1	2925	84	28	5	3535	43	20	4	550	10	8	0	2225	62	29	6	1360	24	29	2	2620	71	34	7	395	8	8	1	615	14	6	1	3912	101	34	9	915	18	3	1
Averages of Year 1899 to 1908.																																																
	1018	26.8	15.8	3.1	586	15.2	7.3	0.9	2716	79.6	34.8	9.5	3398	48.1	26.9	5.5	528	12.2	7.2	.7	2192	58.9	31.2	7.2	1313	21.1	16.1	2	2451	66.1	31.6	6	408	9.5	4.9	0.8	607	12.1	7.9	2.5	3695	89.5	43	11.1	879	20.3	9.6	2.2
1909	1100	32	17	2	610	15	10	1	3020	69	25	6	3545	34	28	5	555	12	9	2	2300	68	24	5	1365	26	21	3	2650	58	28	6	395	3	6	0	615	6	5	1	3975	110	45	14	930	26	9	1

Besides the births registered in the different districts, 43 occurred in the Workhouse, making a total of 502.

TABLE III.
WHISTON RURAL DISTRICT.
Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1909.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.	Cases Notified in Whole District.						Total Cases Notified in Each Locality.																		No. of Cases removed to Hospital from each Locality.												Total Cases removed to Hospital.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.						Bold.	Cronon.	Ditton.	Eccleston.	Hale.	Halewood.	Knowsley.	Rainhill.	Speke.	Tarbock.	Whiston(HW).	Windle.	Bold.	Cronon.	Ditton.	Eccleston.	Hale.	Halewood.	Knowsley.	Rainhill.	Speke.	Tarbock.	Whiston(HW).	Windle.						
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	65 & upwards.																														
Smallpox...			
Cholera.....			
Diphtheria	13	3	7	1	2	...	1	...	1	3	...	...	1	2	...	...	5	..	..	1	...	2	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	6	...	...	12
Membranous Croup {	14	1	2	1	6	4	1	1	1	3	...	2	..	1	1	...	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas.....	170	1	50	103	14	2	23	1	23	32	2	18	1	19	...	7	43	1	20	..	29	16	...	10	...	18	...	6	29	...	...	...	128	
Scarlet fever.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Typhus fever....	...	3	3	2	2	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	5
Enteric fever.....	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Relapsing fever.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Continued fever.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal fever.....	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Plague.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	208	1	57	115	18	12	4	25	2	28	39	2	20	2	22	1	7	58	2	21	...	32	18	...	10	1	20	...	6	37	...	...	145		

H—Sanatorium at Whiston.—Beds, 34; Diseases, 3.
W—Workhouse at Whiston.

TABLE IV.—WHISTON RURAL DISTRICT.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1909.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	DEATHS IN WHOLE DISTRICT AT SUBJOINED AGES.							DEATHS IN LOCALITIES (AT ALL AGES).											Deaths in Public Institutions.	
	All Ages.	Under 1.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.	Bold.	Cronton.	Ditton.	Eccleston.	Hale.	Halewood.	Knowsley.	Rainhill.	Speke.	Tarbock.	Whiston.		Windle.
Small-pox ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Measles	5	1	4	...	...	...	..	1	...	1	...	..	1	...	1	...	...	1	...	...
Scarlet fever ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Whooping-cough	6	2	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	2	..	...	1	1	1
Diphtheria and mem- branous croup ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Croup ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Fever { Typhus ... ..	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric	2	...	...	...	1	1	..	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	3
Other continued ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Epidemic influenza	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	..	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	4
Cholera ... ..	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...
Plague ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diarrhœa	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	6
Enteritis	4	3	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1	..	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal fever	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Erysipelas ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...
Other septic diseases ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Phthisis	21	...	...	...	3	18	...	2	3	...	5	1	1	2	2	...	...	4	1	51
Other tubercular diseases	7	3	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	4	...	5
Cancer, malignant disease	11	...	...	...	...	5	6	...	...	...	2	1	3	3	...	...	1	1	...	17
Bronchitis	21	5	1	...	...	4	11	...	...	3	3	...	...	3	3	1	...	7	1	31
Pneumonia	27	6	3	2	...	11	5	5	2	4	4	...	4	2	2	1	...	3	...	14
Pleurisy	3	...	1	...	...	1	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other diseases of Respiratory organs	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	3
Alcoholism	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	3
Cirrhosis of liver } ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Venereal diseases ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Premature birth	8	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	4	...	...	1	...	...
Diseases and accidents of parturition ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Heart diseases... ..	21	...	1	1	...	13	6	2	1	2	...	3	3	1	3	1	1	1	3	27
Accidents	9	...	1	...	1	6	1	2	...	...	2	...	1	...	1	...	...	3	...	5
Suicides ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
All other causes	75	15	4	2	2	19	33	4	3	11	8	3	7	7	10	2	3	14	3	174
All Causes	227	46	22	6	8	81	64	17	10	25	28	9	24	21	28	6	5	45	9	350

TABLE V.

WHISTON RURAL DISTRICT.

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1909.

Deaths from stated Causes, in Weeks and Months, under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.				Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-2 Months.	2-3 Months.	3-4 Months.	4-5 Months.	5-6 Months.	6-7 Months.	7-8 Months.	8-9 Months.	9-10 Months.	10-11 Months.	11-12 Months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
All Causes.	Certified	...	...	12	1	1	3	17	1	4	1	6	4	...	1	3	2	4	2	45
	Uncertified	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Common Infectious Diseases.	Small-pox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Chicken-pox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
	Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Diphtheria: Croup	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diarrhoeal Diseases.	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	2
	Diarrhoea, all forms	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	2
	Enteritis, Muco-enteritis, Gastro-enteritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
	Gastritis, Gastro-intestinal Catarrh	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Premature Birth	...	...	6	1	...	1	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Wasting Diseases.	Congenital Defects	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Injury at Birth	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Want of Breast-milk, Starvation	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
	Atrophy, Debility Marasmus	...	...	4	...	...	2	6	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
	Tuberculous Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tuberculous Diseases.	Tuberculous Peritonitis: Tabes Mesenterica	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	3
	Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Syphilis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Rickets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Causes.	Meningitis not Tuberculous	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Convulsions	...	...	1	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	3
	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	2	...	1	...	5
	Laryngitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	3	...	6
	Suffocation, overlying	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Other Causes	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
				13	1	1	3	18	1	4	1	6	4	...	1	3	2	4	2	46

Births in the year—legitimate, 469 ; illegitimate, 33.

Population—21060.

(Estimated to middle of 1909.)

Deaths in the year of Infants, 46 (legitimate).

Deaths from all Causes at all Ages—227.

